

WASHINGTON – Rep. Sanford D. Bishop, Jr. (D-GA), the Ranking Member of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies, released the following statement after General James N. Mattis testified at the first subcommittee hearing in the 112th Congress. General Mattis, the combatant commander for U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) was on Capitol Hill to discuss the Fiscal Year 2012 budget request submitted to Congress.

CENTCOM is a regional unified combatant command, with forces currently deployed primarily in Iraq and Afghanistan in combat roles. It also has responsibility for most of the Middle East and Central Asia.

“I was pleased to have General Mattis before our subcommittee this afternoon and hear directly from him about what CENTCOM needs to finish winding down operations in Iraq, and start to transition responsibilities to the Afghan people. After hearing from General Mattis, it is clear that while our drawdown from Iraq is proceeding on schedule, we still have serious challenges in Afghanistan, and other parts of the Middle East remain unstable.

“The issues before CENTCOM are difficult, but our committee must do all it can to help General Mattis deal with these obstacles efficiently and effectively. As Ranking Member, I am committed to working with Chairman Culberson and my colleagues on the subcommittee to help them get the job done.”

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